



# Road Crew Report

## Key Findings

- Almost 20,000 rides were given to potential drunk drivers from July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003 in the three small, rural communities.
- These rides are estimated to have prevented 15 alcohol-related crashes on area roads during the one year study, a 17% reduction.
- The estimated cost of an average crash is \$56,000, while the cost to avoid a crash by implementing a Road Crew program is just \$15,000. Savings in the demonstration communities was about \$615,000 in the first year.
- Almost 70% of the people in each of the communities were aware of the program.
- Among those who knew of the program, 80% of those surveyed had positive feelings about the program.
- Half of those who knew of the program felt that the number of people who drove after excessive drinking had decreased.

## March 2004

### Road Crew Keeps Drunk Drivers Off the Roads

A year-long demonstration project in Wisconsin has given almost 20,000 rides to potential drunk drivers in three rural communities. According to a study of the Road Crew project, these rides resulted in an estimated 17% reduction in drunk driving crashes in those areas.

The Road Crew program uses social marketing techniques to motivate people to choose the ride service instead of driving themselves. Wisconsin was one of only five states to receive a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Discretionary grant to fund a roadway safety project focused on alcohol-related crashes among 21-to-

34-year-olds.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Bureau of Transportation Safety led the statewide project team, in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin School of Business.

Miller Brewing Company and the Tavern League of Wisconsin helped sponsor the program.

The Road Crew service has been available in the communities of Dodgeville/Mineral Point, Tomah, and Polk County during the demonstration year of July 2002



Road Crew limousine from Polk County, WI

through June 2003.

Research showed that the Road Crew project achieved measurable success in making roadways safer. As the one-year demonstration ends, its techniques are being made available to communities throughout Wisconsin and the United States.

### Social Marketing Strategy and the Road Crew Brand

The Road Crew is a new and innovative approach that supports community-based strategies for providing and promoting alternative transportation services to reduce the incidence of drunk driv-

ing and decrease alcohol-related crashes.

Extensive research was conducted with the target market of 21-to-34-year-old men, to learn how a program could

be developed that would fit into their lives and lifestyles. The results guided community planning teams to develop programs that provided rides to, between and home from the bars, separating drivers from their vehicles before they took their first drink. The Road Crew, featuring limousines and older luxury vehicles, was shown to be a fun, convenient, hassle-free way to enjoy a safe evening out.

*"Most past work has attempted to lessen alcohol-impaired driving either through the use of education or through the use of law enforcement. With the Road Crew, social marketing works by providing other transportation as an appealing, safe and affordable alternative to driving after excessive drinking."* - social marketing expert Michael Rothschild, University of Wisconsin School of Business

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Dodgeville/Mineral Point Road Crew spokesperson at press event September 2003

## Demonstration Communities Continue Service

Two of the original *Road Crew* communities (Polk County and Dodgeville/Mineral Point, Wisconsin) are continuing service through 2004. With financial support from ride fares, fundraising events and donations, these services are optimistic that they can be self-sustaining into the future.

In Polk County, participating bars and taverns are contributing an annual fee to become sponsoring members of their *Road Crew* service. In Dodgeville/Mineral Point, the use of volunteer drivers has kept costs down to a level where they are considering expanding service to neighboring communities. Both programs celebrated a successful New Year's Eve 2003, when over 300 rides were given in these small, rural Wisconsin communities.

## Launching a Road Crew Program

*"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you always gotten."*

Some health and public safety issues seem intractable, some diseases incurable. But if communities are open to experimentation, new solutions may emerge.

Traffic statistics show that there were 17,419 alcohol-related fatalities in the United States in 2002, an average of one fatality every 30 minutes.

That's unacceptable. If your community is committed to making its roadways safer, the *Road Crew* offers an exciting new approach that meets three major goals:

- reducing the number of alcohol-impaired drivers on the road;
- decreasing alcohol-related crashes; and
- improving community safety.

For more information about launching a *Road Crew* program, please contact:

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In Wisconsin, contact your WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety Regional Program Manager or:

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*"The Road Crew program has shown that behavior change is possible. Safety is not only a wise choice, but it can be made an attractive alternative to the targeted 21-to-34-year-old age group."* - Carol Karsten, Alcohol Program Manager of WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety

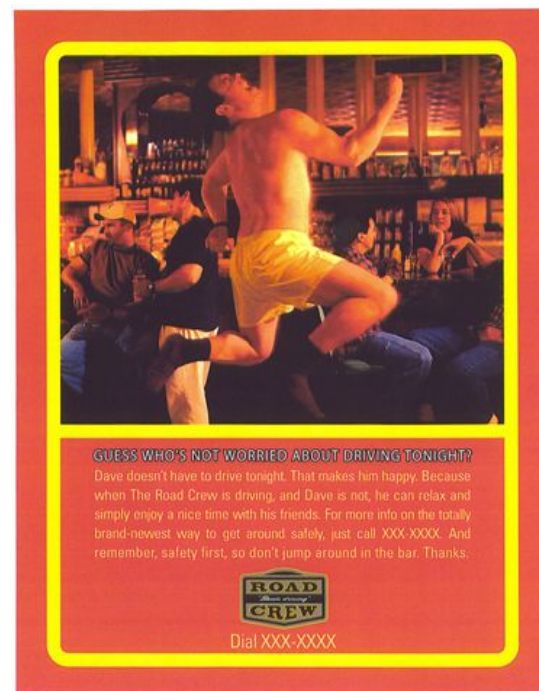
## Social Marketing Strategy and the Road Crew Brand

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The *Road Crew* approach is based on social marketing, which borrows commercial marketing techniques that motivate consumers to try new products. Commercial marketers realize if you want people to try a new product, it must be appealing and serve a need. If the "need" is for people to get home after excessive drinking, there must be "appealing" ways for them to do so other than driving their own car. This initiative focuses on those who are not necessarily identified as "problem drinkers," but who need to get home safely after an evening of heavy drinking.

One significant benefit of establishing a *Road Crew* program is extensive market research and demonstrations have already been completed, laying a foundation for a successful program. There is a market-tested brand specifically designed to appeal to the 21-to-34-year-old bar crowd, with a logo and slogan: "*The Road Crew – Beats Driving.*" And there are countless examples of lessons learned from the demonstration communities that will help new communities take advantage of their best practices.

For more information, visit the *Road Crew* online at  
[www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/publications/topic/safety.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/publications/topic/safety.htm)



Poster that can be customized with a local phone number.